

Writings
of
J. Leslie Peterson

Compiled by
Ellen P. Balls
Marjorie P. Smiley



Preface

Time passes. I get bored. It seems I can remember the past quite well. I have decided to write some sketches without removing the scabs and warts like so many do who attempt to write about people and events that are long past.

J. Leslie Peterson



Foreword

The stories in this little book were written by our father, John Leslie Peterson. They are his memories of early times and people in his life. We believe he wrote them so that family would know some of the past before all the people who lived them were gone.

Dad wrote these from his memory when he was in his late 80s and 90s. One of the stories he wrote in his 100th year. He had a remarkable retentive memory and was an avid reader.

In compiling these stories and transcribing them from his handwriting, we did not change his original wording.

Ellen P. Balls
Marjorie P. Smiley

We want to thank many family members for their contributions to this book. We especially want to thank Laura M. Balls (wife of Leslie A. Balls, Grandson) for her expert help in typing, scanning pictures and formatting this book. Without her valuable help, this book would not have been possible

epb & mps

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J. Leslie Peterson – Written beginning December, 1984.

EARLY DAYS IN AMALGA

It was 8 below zero last night. Real winter has finally set in and it isn't even winter yet according to the calendar.

Looking back on 9 decades of life, I am now 6 years into the 10th decade. This is rather difficult. I would like to recount some of the happenings of the early 1890s and the early part of my life. All I have to rely on is a good memory. I fear it is slowly fading away.

I was born August 27, 1889 in Logan, Utah, in a log house. The house was on the northeast corner of 4th West and 2nd South. I moved to what is now Amalga with my parents in 1891. I have lived here since that time with the exception of the winters I spent in school from 1898 until 1912 when I was married to Ilarene Rawlins. She died August 16, 1982 after 70 years of marriage.

There were happy times, but life was a struggle. We endured many hardships and inconveniences young people today would not tolerate. Some of the things we didn't have: no electricity, no telephone, no running water (only a pump outside), no automobile (only horse-drawn buggies or wagons). The radio wasn't invented; television wasn't even thought of. Marconi had invented the wireless communication in 1908.

The bathroom was not thought of. Saturday night was bath night; fire up the wood stove, put the boiler on. It would hold four or five buckets of water. Nearly every family had a large tin tub; bring it in, set it next to the stove for

warm, fill the tub about half full, get the water just warm enough. Large families would bath several kids in the same water. Oh Yes! When you had to go, there was a nice little house called the privy or backhouse. In the summertime it wasn't so bad if a breeze was blowing; otherwise, the myriad of flies and the stench was so terrible it nearly overcame one. Conditions like this have changed drastically.

There is much I remember and could write about the simple things as they affected our lives and our family.

PETERSON SAW MILL AND PLANE MILL

The saw mill was in Logan Canyon and the Plane Mill was located on South Third West. It was really a flourishing enterprise during the late 1870s and 80s until Grandfather died in 1894. His health had been declining for several years. With the leader gone and the depression on at that time (this was under the first term of President Grover Cleveland), the family decided to sell everything. Anton Anderson bought the plane mill. This included all the machinery and the water rights. This was the beginning of the Anderson Lumber Company. It is still operating today with outlets in several states.

The saw mill in Logan was moved to Teton Basin. Ed Holden had established a residence there. Holden was quite successful for some time in this endeavor.

I asked Dad why the Peterson saw mill was so far up Logan Canyon and

he explained that this father, P. N. Peterson and sons had discovered this hollow or small canyon up above Beaver Landing about three miles on the way toward Franklin Basin. There was quite a forest of white pine in the hollow.

Most of the saw mills were located near Logan. At that time there was an abundance of red pine comparable to Oregon fir. White pine was for finishing lumber and red pine for frame work. By the late 1880s all the easy timber had been harvested. All the small timber large enough for railroad ties had been cut. It seemed there were no regulations. It was first come and cut down anything they could use. All the limbs were left where they fell. What a brutal method. It is not allowed today.

Teddy Roosevelt made a trip west when he was a young man and saw the waste and destructive way things were. He spent his entire life preaching conservation. He did more than anyone to rectify this wasteful condition.

I made a trip once with Dad up to the old Peterson saw mill site. All that was left of the old place was a pile of saw dust and the reservoir where they stored water when the creek was low in the night time. This would allow them to operate the saws during the day time. Dad showed me where the bunk house, the mess house and other necessary buildings were located. A forest fire had destroyed everything. Dad said that forest fires during the late 1880s and 90s raged unchecked nearly every summer.

Now where once grew a massive pine forest, there was brush. On many

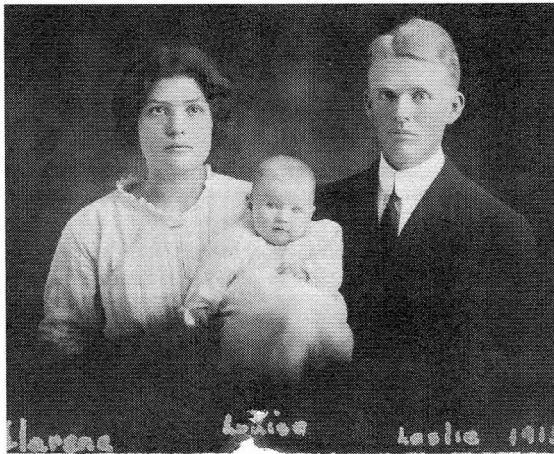
slopes and hills Aspen has taken over and there is very little new growth of pine. Logan Canyon served a wonderful purpose in this part of the West, Cache Valley, and especially Logan City.

WASH DAY

It is only a few short years ago when anyone riding through Cache County, especially on a Monday, would see clothes lines at the side or in the back of homes, loaded with clean washed clothes.

The way it used to be done, when our family was small, in the early nineteen teens and twenties: My dear wife, Ila, was up early, and I would try to arrange my work (honest) so I would be available to help some. First, put the boiler on, go out and pump five or six buckets of water, fill the boiler and the reservoir on the wood stove. Fire up.

Our first washing machine was the Great Western—it was a marvel! It stood on legs which supported the wood tub. Upon the lid was a mechanical device that turned the dolly in the tub and agitated the clothes in the soapy suds. Who took hold of the handle to operate the machine? Yours truly. I was to supply the power. Each batch of washing was to be agitated six or eight minutes.



After several batches of wash, I became exhausted, and Ila would say, "See if you can make a little dinner for the kids." What a relief, this was more like a picnic. First, fry some nice ham, put it up in the warming oven. Peel some potatoes, fry them in the ham grease, peel an onion for flavor, a little pepper and salt, and just a pinch of sugar; when it was about done, break four or five eggs in it and stir until set. By this time Louise, with Allie's help, had set the table. What a repast, with plenty of milk, bread and butter, chili sauce, bottled fruit for dessert. What more could you ask. While I was doing this, I always bragged about my ability as a cook. I think the kids believed me. I doubt if the grownups ever did. Now when I look back, these were the happy times.

In the yard all pinned up, the wash half dry. Ila decided because it had been such a nice warm sunshiny day, she could leave the wash on the lines, then bring the clothes in the next day when they were all nice and dry (there was no weather forecast in those days, no warning). This was early March; yes, Spring used to come early, sometimes in the old days. We all retired early.

The stars were shining. Ila was tired from the hard days work. We were soon sleeping soundly.

Shortly after midnight I heard the whine of the wind. I could hear the sleet and snow pelting against the windowpane. Finally when morning came, I looked out at the clothes lines. What a forlorn sight. The half-frozen clothes had been ripped from the lines. Those that were left were in shreds. Most of them had completely disappeared in the snow. The small clothes were all blown away and were buried in the snow. We retrieved some of them when the snow melted, they were torn and shredded.

When Ila saw what the storm had done to her wash, she didn't cry. She was a strong determined person—an expert seamstress. She could make anything, even the finest lace crochet, tatting, netting, etc. Her five daughters were always well dressed. She even made some of the boys' clothes. With the storm over, after a lot of patching and mending, everything was back to normal.

How times have changed. Now days with an automatic washer and dryer, how much easier it is to keep nice and clean, with very little apparent effort. Young people starting out in life now have things much easier. It is hard for them to realize what pioneer women went through to raise a family and keep a home.

*By J. Leslie Peterson
95 years old*

*Notes from J. Leslie Peterson –
Written possible late 1980s*

Early Days on the Ranch –

There were no factories or dams along the Bear River. No fluctuation of the constant flow and no pollution of the water. After high water, which came about the first of June, the fishing was always at its best. I started to go fishing with my older brothers when I was only 6 years old and have been an avid fisherman ever since. We caught mostly chubs and some native trout. There were no carp or dwarf catfish in the river until 1905. I have always hated the ones responsible for planting these worthless fish in the Bear River.

I soon learned to swim, and during the hot weather we were swimming almost every day. My cousin, Vern Peterson, who lived about a mile south of our place, was my constant companion. We each had a 22 rifle and we spent much of our time hunting, fishing and swimming. Mother worried for fear we might drown and cautioned us every time we went near the river. It used to be said that Bear River claimed a life every year. This has been quite true down to the present time.

I can't remember when I learned to ride horseback. The ranch consisted of some 600 acres. It took a lot of horses to farm that much land. There was always a band of some 20 herd, including 4 or 5 saddle ponies. I rode everywhere and loved it. An exciting time each spring was breaking several colts, some to harness, and some to ride. I became very adept at driving a team of horses before I was large enough to lift the harness on them. I was very proud when I was allowed to drive one of the mowers when I was 10 years old.

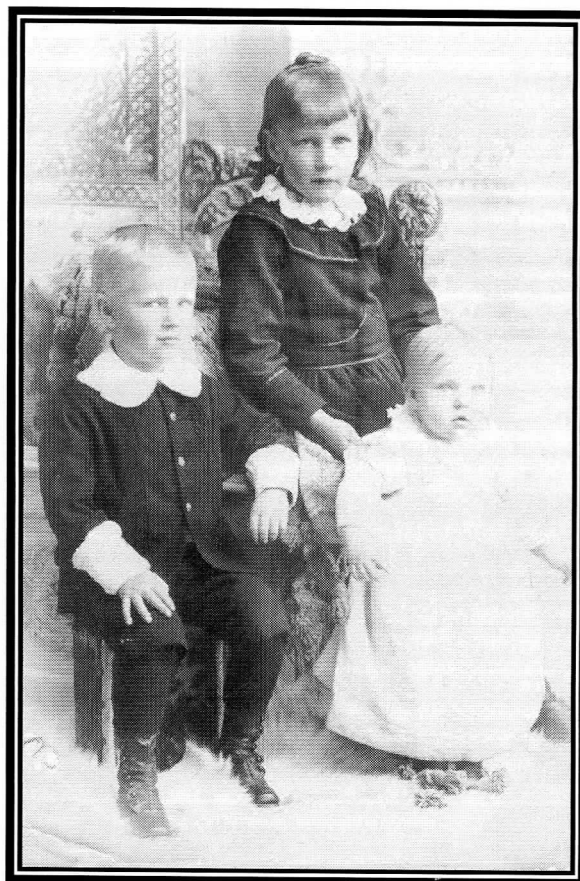


Lars Peter Peterson home in Amalga after the porch was added

The land, as I first remember, was covered with sage brush, very heavy. It took a lot of hard work to remove it with the equipment they had at that time. It was all the fuel we had to burn. It made a quick hot fire and it was necessary to feed the stove every few minutes. I suppose we all smelled like a bunch of Indians, but that was the standard fuel for the neighborhood. We all smelled alike.



J. Leslie Peterson and sister
Ada Peterson England (standing)



J. Leslie Peterson, Ada P. England and
Baby Myrtle P. McDonald



Early Members of the Amalga Ward:

Front Row L to R

Mae & Frank Wood, Mrs. Rindlisbacher, Mrs. Toombs, Ellen Ash Peterson,
J. Leslie Peterson, Ilarene Peterson

2nd Row

Sally & Lew Petty, Charlotte & Jimmy Thain, Maria & H. P. Hansen

Back Row

Emma & Brown Wood, Elizabeth & Joseph Astle, Effie & Welley Smith

Schools –

In 1893 the Alto School District was organized. A large one-room frame building was erected on the Newton Road just west of the Clay slough. This school operated until 1898.

About a dozen families had homesteaded on the poor clay land near the barrens. They had to haul in water for domestic use. This, together with the meager crops, discouraged the idea of a permanent residence. By the year 1900 they had nearly all moved away. Nothing remains of these homes or the school, only possibly a few foundation rocks. This school was the community center while it operated—parties, dances, etc. One celebration I remember was the day Utah was admitted to Statehood. The party continued all night and the sun came up just as we reached home. Being a child, I had slept on a bench most of the night. I well remember the candy and ice cream because they were rather scarce articles in those days.

I attended the Alto School one year—1896. My Uncle Nephi Peterson was the teacher. He boarded at our home. I have often wondered how Mother ever put up all the lunches; cooked all the meals; made butter and cheese; did a lot of sewing and kept the house, etc.

After the Alto School closed the family moved to Logan nearly every year for school purposes. Father bought a house at 57 South 4th West. He later improved this place and it became our winter home for many years. We

children attended the New Jersey Academy. This was a Presbyterian Church Missionary School. The reason we attended this school was that the Logan City Schools would not enroll pupils entering after a certain date in the fall. It seemed we could never get moved in time due to necessary planting and harvesting of crops on the ranch.

I have always been glad that we attended this school. They were very strict. The rule was that you got your lessons or stayed in after school until you did. The teachers were young women from the State of New Jersey. One that impressed me the most was Miss Charlotte Kyle. After the school discontinued in about 1920, she became an instructor in English at the Agricultural College (now Utah State University). I attended the College one semester, then I attended the Brigham Young College for three winters. I also studied at Henager Business College in Salt Lake City.

While I attended the BYC in Logan, I met Ilarene Rawlins. We sang in the school choir and we were also in a school light opera, "The Mocking Bird". This was the most delightful and happy time of our young lives. I had courted a few other young ladies; none seemed right for me until I met Ila. We were soon very much in love and were married June 5, 1912.

Mother said the first year on the ranch was the most difficult. They moved into the log house located on my Grandfather's homestead just south of Father's homestead. The log house was one-half mile south of where Dad

started a homestead. He dug a well the year before and bricked it up. At that time the surface water was good. There was no irrigation or contamination. Dad had put in a rock foundation. This first year he and his brother Nephi built a room. It was the beginning of the house which was added onto for several years. It still stands and is lived in today. Mother and Dad lived in it for 25 years. There are many fond memories connected with that dwelling. It is the oldest building still in use in Amalga.

This was dry farming when Dad filed on the homestead until 1906 when the first irrigation water from the West Cache Canal started to operate. What an event! I can remember standing on a new bridge and watching the first water trickle under it. Dad said, "Les, go up to the basement and bring a couple of bottles of Fisher Beer." What a celebration! The family and some of the neighbors were there. The change from dry farming to irrigation had begun. What a change and what a struggle. It took from 1898 to 1906 to build the West Cache Canal.



Early Day Header Crew

Memories of Grandfather, Peter Neils Peterson, Father Lars Peter Peterson, and Uncles Rast, Chris and Nephi

My Grandfather, Peter Neils Peterson, immigrated to Utah from Denmark in 1861 with his wife Mary and three children. As a young man he had served in the cavalry in the Danish army. He fought in the Crimean War and was wounded in battle. As the oldest in the family he inherited all the property. This included all the land which was four hectors. It wasn't enough to support the family, so he worked at carpentry as well. He became very good at this trade. After making his way to Utah, he soon established a home in Logan. He was called to serve a work mission for the Church in the construction of the St. George temple. He spent 18 months in this endeavor. He built a sawmill in Logan canyon, also a planing mill in South Third West in Logan. All his sons and in-laws worked for him. He had the contract and built the south wing of Old Main for the Agriculture College (Utah State University). He furnished material from his planing mill and did most of the construction work on the Cache County Court House. Many of the homes he built in Logan are still in use. He also took up a quarter section of land in what is now Amalga, Utah.

In fact, my Grandfather's life was one of constant struggle from the cradle to the grave. He was a devout Latter Day Saint all of his life. He died in 1894 at the age of 66 from an apparent ruptured appendix. It was the first funeral I ever attended.

My father, Lars Peter Peterson, worked with his father until he was married in October 10, 1879 to Hanna Esterholt. Three children were born to this union, Austin, Oliver and Nephi. Hanna died when the youngest was only two weeks old. She was only 24 years old. Needless to say, Dad never got over this tragedy. He did go on to make a success of his life. Dad lived until he was 80 years old. He had sold the ranch in Amalga on February 19, 1919 for \$82,000. This was considered a real fortune at that time.

Dad was very near sighted. This condition prevented him from doing fine carpentry work. His brothers, Rast, Chris and Nephi were expert carpenters and so were his brother-in-laws Ed Holden and Chris Simmson. They all worked for grandfather at the saw mill in the canyon and the plane mill in Logan. Dad did the rough work; he delivered lumber and supplies to where they were building homes, etc. This was all done with horses and wagons. Some deliveries were to all the small towns around Cache Valley. Dad and his brother Rast did the work on the small farm, 20 acres at 6th West and 2nd North.

It seemed that Dad was sort of on the outside as far as the rest of the family was concerned. He had a difficult time as far as schooling, but he wrote a good plain hand and could read all the larger print.

I used to batch with Dad on the Ranch in the springtime before the rest of the family came out. In the evenings I would tell him some of what I had learned in school as the BY College. I

was surprised many times to find he knew more about a subject than I did.

Then he told me that his younger brother, Nephi, attended the University of Utah. In fact, he was among some of the first to graduate from the U of U. He majored in History and Math. When Nephi came home he brought his books and examination papers with him. There was a great bond between the brothers. Nephi felt sorry for Dad because of his poor eyesight. The brothers spent many long winter evenings together. Nephi would spend hours reading to dad and explaining his lessons. In this way, Dad received quite a liberal education about history and mathematics. Dad had a good memory and he could recall from the lessons his younger brother read to him.

As years passed, Nephi went on a mission for the church to England. He

told about an event that happened when he was in New York City. He walked across the new Brooklyn Bridge. This was in 1886. Thousands were lined up for the privilege.

Nephi married Anna Neilson in Salt Lake City. They lived at 9th South 4th East in a back ally. Anna's parents were poor emigrants. It became Nephi's responsibility to support them. There was no welfare or other support in those days. Nephi taught school and worked at odd times at carpentry. It was a struggle. He built a modest frame home next to Anna's parents. They raised five children. Needless to say, they were always poor. Dad helped Nephi but then Dan was just getting started on the ranch. When Dad did any building, he would always send for his brother. In many ways, he helped him over the rough spots. I remember the old days. How times have changed.



Lars Peter Peterson & Ellen Ash Peterson in California 1920

The Log House

1st Place – Senior, Non-fiction

If this old Log House could talk it would tell quite a story. The logs were hauled out of Green Canyon in the spring of 1867. It was built on a lot in the Third Ward of Logan that summer, by my Grandfather P. N. Peterson. He and his family lived in it for a few years. During this time Grandfather and his sons built a sawmill in Logan Canyon; he also built a planeing mill in Logan City on South Third West on what is now the property of Anderson Lumber Company.

In 1876 my father, the late L. P. "Pete" Peterson, filed on a homestead in what is now Amalga. He purchased the old Log House from his father and moved it to this location in about 1880. It was one of the first buildings in this district, and I think the only one still in use. In moving it, it was necessary to take down the logs. They were numbered and marked so they could be more readily assembled. As there was no bridge on the Bear River at that time, the logs were ferried across. It was first reconstructed just a few rods west of where the Darrell Nobel home is now located.

The land was covered with sage and rabbit brush, some of the sage was taller than a man's head. In the first flush of spring, wild flowers and native blue grass grew in great profusion. As the warm weather advanced it became dry and parched. It was about the most desolate and uninviting landscape one can imagine. Here father lived in this Log House while proving up on the homestead. He began to clear the land of brush, plowed some small plots, and

began raising dry farm grain. Later on in the eighties he moved his family here for the summer months. The Log House was their home.

Father built a small frame house about a half mile north, where he dug a well and found good water. This is now the home of Odell and Audrey Smith. In 1891 the family moved to this new location and it became the permanent home of the Peterson family for many years. About the next year, 1892, the Log House was moved to the new location. Some of the very first of my childhood recollections were inspired by this event. The house was put on skids, and the motive power to move it was teams of horses. I can remember how they would strain and pull to get it moving. It seemed that all the neighbors came to help, and I have never seen so many horses in my life. There was loud talking and laughing. It seemed everyone was having a good time. After the move, Mother had all the men in to dinner. By this time we had quite a few fine neighbors. There were the Bingham's, the Woods' Brothers, and William Nobel to the north of our ranch, and to the south there were my uncle H. C. Peterson, the Andreassen's and the Jorgensen Brothers. Of course as the years passed, many more families moved to Amalga.

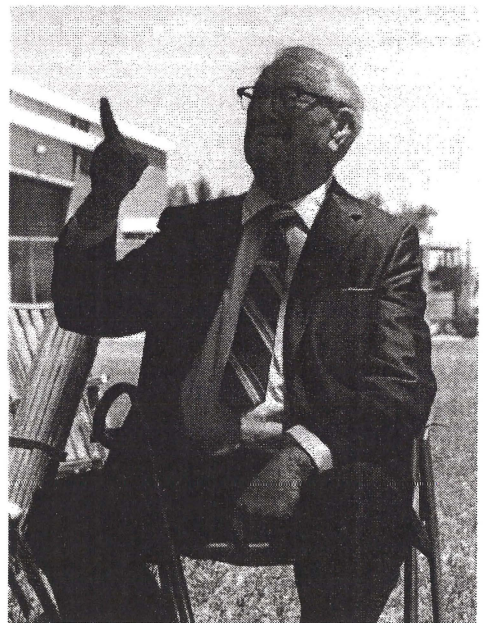
The old Log House was used as a Grainery. Father used to store a thousand bushels of wheat in it each harvest, and have it to sell in the spring when the price was a little higher. Ten or twenty-five cents a bushel meant a lot in those days.

In 1919 father sold out all of his holdings in Amalga and retired to Logan. The Log House went with the land and now belong to Leonard and David Roskelly. Leonard lived in it one summer. The Roskelly's sold the Log House to a man by the name of North who lived in it for a short time. Later on he used it for a horse barn. The price of land reverted back to father through a contract failure. Father had a sentimental side and he wanted me to have the Log House, so I moved it to my place in 1922. Down through the years I have found a use for it. In 1924 my wife and I, with our four older children, lived in it while we built our present residence. It has housed beet laborers of many nationalities; local white boys, Japanese, Koreans, Mexicans, and others.

The old Log House was given to the Jensen Living Historical Farm in 1974. This farm depicts life as it was lived in the early Eighteen Seventies. The Log House now stands as a silent reminder of the days that used to be—a way of life quite different from the present one.

By J. Leslie Peterson

Note: This story won first place in the Senior Citizen Division in a contest sponsored by the Benson L.D.S. Stake. There were 30 entries from the six wards, Amalga, Benson, Clarkston, Cornish, Newton and Trenton.



Typical J. Leslie Peterson

Sugar Beets

There were in Cache Valley at one time five sugar factories. It was the main farm cash crop. It was a source of employment for several hundred people. Nearly every irrigated farm in Cache Valley depended on sugar beets as the main source of income.

The first factory was built just south of Logan in 1897, the next was at Lewiston. Later the Holly Company built a factory just south of Preston. An independent factory was built at Cornish in about 1918. The Amalgamated Sugar Company built the one at what is now Amalga.

In 1916 an electric Railroad was built from the plant in Lewiston to this locality. Within the next two years there was a new Sugar Factory, two new stores, 16 new homes, a hotel with 45 rooms, a blacksmith shop and a lumber yard. The Dyer Company who built the factory shipped in train loads of equipment nearly every day.

The Dyer Construction Company's main office was in the eastern United States. They had built sugar factories for the Germans in Europe. The first sugar beet seed we planted came from Germany. They were ahead of the United States in this culture.

By 1918 this place looked like it was going to be quite a town. About 300 people lived here. They were mostly LDS, so the Mormon Church decided to form a new ward. Jessie Mortensen was to be the Bishop and Joseph Wasden was to be the 1st counselor. Alma Merrill, the Stake President, called for a meeting to be held at the Hotel,

when they would complete the ward organization, and name a 2nd counselor.

There were over 200 at this meeting, with all the big wigs of the Stake in attendance. Of course, my wife and family were present; I was holding my son, Bud (Maurice). Alma Merrill was the main speaker, and I nearly dropped Bud when he said J. Leslie Peterson was selected 2nd counselor. I filled that position for about 6 years. President Merrill said they wanted someone who had lived there. Elders Wasden and Mortensen were newcomers to the locality.

President Merrill then said, "Now you have a new ward, what are you going to call it?" There were many suggestions made. Finally Sylvester Low stood up and said, "We should honor the ones that have made this all possible, The Amalgamated Sugar Company. This name means bringing together. The first part 'Amalga' is a pretty name for this new ward, I suggest it be called Amalga." The Stake President called for a vote and everyone voted in favor.

The reason I remember this event so well was because at this meeting I was called to the new Bishopric.

By J. Leslie Peterson

Note: I write this story all from memory. I am now 100 years and 3 months old. I have lived all this long time in beautiful Amalga. It was first called Alto. It only existed for about six years. So many little farms on the poor clay land of the barrens were abandoned. I have a wonderful posterity. I am now ready to go when called.



Right: Dad with cousin George South standing by two-room house in Amalga about 1919 or 1920



Mother and Dad standing in one of their many flower gardens 1970?

The Barrens & Pump Chris

Chris Hendersen lived for a number of years on the west side of the Barrens on a clay knoll just east of the Winnergren residence. He farmed about ten acres. His equipment consisted of a hand plow, a small iron harrow, a team of horses and one milk cow. There was a straw-topped shed and a one-room frame house. He also owned an artesian well digging outfit. He dug wells and sold hand pumps. He was known locally as "Pump Chris".

It seemed that Chris had connections with a company that supplied him with pumps for surface wells, pipe and perforated points for shallow wells. Myers and Pitcher Pumps were used on these so-called surface wells. Nearly anywhere, where the land was sandy, a pipe could be driven down 10 or 12 feet and with a suction pump and plenty of elbow grease for motor power, a supply of

apparently fresh drinking water was obtained. There were some open wells where water was drawn to water livestock.

In the spring Sage Brush, Greeswood, Native grass, and wild flowers made it the only pleasant time of the year. The summers were baking hot and the winters were extremely cold. There was not a tree, or anything green, after the spring time. It was a most uninviting land. It was the home of the coyote, jack rabbit, rodents, snakes, some rattle snakes, bear, and wolf along the river. It had been a hunting ground for the Indians—Shoshone, Bannocks and other tribes. The many arrowheads, mostly flint, attest to this fact.

This was the land that is now the prosperous farming town of Amalga. The Barrens to the west of the town have a history that has never yet been completely told.

Charley Pickett

By J. Leslie Peterson

Charley Pickett was an old hermit or recluse that lived in a small shake or house on the clay flat next to the clay slough for over 30 years. This place was located about a mile and a half west of the Amalga Ward church house.

The question is how did this situation start and why? I guess I knew Charley personally as well or better than anyone else. Charley was somewhat of a cook, and in the winter and spring of the year, Dad hired Charley to look after the place and cook for us when we were on the ranch. Now don't get me wrong. Charley was a good and honest old man, but being alone so much when he had an opportunity out of his meager income, he would buy a "bottle". I spent many days alone with Charley and we got along fine. At that time in my story I was in my early teens. I enjoyed the stories of his early life when he worked on the river boats on the Mississippi River. When Charley got his bottle out and took a big horn of whiskey, I knew I was in for an evening of his early life. By the way, although Charley had packed around a lot in the early days, he never taught me anything but what a teenage boy should hear. Charley was always warning me about the pitfalls in life and how I should always be on my guard. Although he drank occasionally, he never would offer me a drop. In fact, he preached against it, especially when a young man was growing up.

Charley was born in the State of Mississippi in a small village on the Mississippi River. He was youngest of 10 children. He said his folks were of

French extraction—his father left when the Civil War started and they never heard from him again. His mother died when he was about 10 years old. This seemed a very painful period of his life, and he never went into many details about it. He had a brother that worked on a river boat that went from New Orleans to St. Louis and on one trip he got Charley on as a cabin boy. His duties consisted of washing dishes, swabbing the deck, and at times helping the cook. The cook seemed to like Charley, and kept him on several trips between New Orleans and St. Louis. The Mississippi was the main source of transportation and communication between St. Louis and New Orleans. After several trips on steamboats, Charley got a job on a flatboat. These boats were more like rafts. They were made out of dry logs with a platform nailed on top. They could pile several thousand pounds of produce on them. A crew consisted of five or six men. It took quite an effort at times to keep the boat in the main stream. The men used long poles to steer it away from the sandy banks. It took from four to six weeks to make the trip from St. Louis to New Orleans. As usual Charley was the cook for the crew. When they arrived at New Orleans, the produce and boat were sold, and the crew would get transportation back up the river to St. Louis. It was the best paying job on the river and Charley seemed to like it. At that time the old Mississippi was the "life". There were dozens of river steamers: some were elaborate boats that boasted the finest in entertainments and accommodations. Flatboats by the score carried produce and lumber down to New Orleans and other river ports along the way. It was in this

environment that Charley grew to manhood. He must have been a handsome young man; because when I first knew him in the early 1890s he still had wavy black hair, snappy black eyes, and a good complexion—Charley seemed to love the life at St. Louis at that period in history. St. Louis was really the gateway to the west. Thousands of people that settled on the plains and points west kept the place a busy metropolis.

It was here that romance entered into Charley's young life. As he described the girl she was a beautiful blond with blue eyes and long, wavy light hair. Of course, they fell in love and decided to get married. Charley decided to make one more river trip on a flatboat as this paid good money, and then they could get married in some style; as a trip like this took several months. He looked forward with great anticipation meeting his intended again. When he arrived back in St. Louis, at first he couldn't find her. When he did find her he said, "By God she was married to another fellow." He couldn't stand St. Louis after this disappointment.

He had a friend named Archie Stewart. The two of them joined a group that was going west. They first went to Omaha. They stayed some time in Omaha earning a little extra money, then on west again finally landing in Salt Lake City. It wasn't long until Charley got a job working for a man by the name of Jim Rawlins. He liked this man and his family (by the way, my wife's maiden name was Rawlins. She was born and raised in Lewiston, Utah, a daughter of the late Harvey M. Rawlins). He and Jim Rawlins were related. Jim Rawlins lived in Cotton Wood in the part that is

now Holiday. Jim liked Charley and paid him well. Charley bought some nice clothes and conducted himself so that he became a respected citizen of Cotton Wood. Charley's friend Archie Stewart induced him to come up to Cache Valley with him—this was about 1885. They filed on two homesteads of 160 acres each. The homestead laws required them to live on the land and commence to farm it. This required them to be present at least three months of each year. They built this plain board shack about 10 ft. X 12 ft. with one small window, one door, no chimney pipe, just a hole in the roof for a stove. It was only meant as a temporary place to stay, but it became the home of Charley Pickett from about 1885 until 1923. At first Stewart helped Charley. They plowed a few acres and planted grain. The first few crops were nearly complete failures due to the poor quality of the land; grass hoppers, neumures, jack rabbits, prairie chickens and sage hens that finished off some crops completely.

I think Stewart realized it was a hopeless situation. He went back to Cotton Wood, entered into some kind of business, and apparently was fairly successful. They had some kind of an understanding, because he sent Charley a little money every three months. This amount with what little Charley could earn working for the farmers on the better land, kept him in the barest necessities. He had a cart and a couple of old horses—it was necessary to haul what water was needed for drinking or cooking. Occasionally one would see him in his cart going to town. He always had this old beer keg that contained the water.

One winter he and Leonard Miles established a small restaurant in Smithfield. It didn't pan out too well; the menu consisted of ham and eggs, fried potatoes and black coffee. If a customer wanted a steak, Charley would go next door to Leonard Miles butcher shop. This took a lot of time. It disgusted some that were in a hurry. There were other drawbacks. He had been alone so much that when he met someone, he started in talking and never stopped. After an effort of a few months, Leonard and Charley broke up, and soon Charley was back in his shack on the barrens.

After my wife and I were well established in our home in what is now Amalga, he often came to our place. We always had a garden and he enjoyed helping hoe the weeds, and doing any odd jobs there were about the place. We would always have him into dinner. I know he admired the way we were establishing a home, raising a family, etc. Our oldest daughter, Louise, remembers him very well—she is blonde. He said he knew a girl once in St. Louise years ago that had just such pretty hair. I remembered then the story he once told me of how she married someone else. I guess he never got over this disappointment. This may have been the main reason he could live such a secluded life. Charley was very independent and it was difficult to give him anything. He would only accept a few vegetables, some eggs or maybe a loaf of bread.

When the Alto school house was built in 1893, this was only about a mile from where Charley lived. He could play the banjo or guitar and willingly played for the numerous dances and

entertainments. While the school at Alto was in operation, it was the only public activity in the community. It didn't last very long; so many people moved away that it was discontinued about 1897. In 1917 the Amalgamated Sugar built a plant where the Cache Valley Dairy is now located. Soon there were a couple of stores, a hotel, and sixteen new frame dwellings built. Transportation wasn't like it is today--very poor roads and only a few automobiles. The employees had to live close to their work—thus the country town of Amalga was born. How did this effect Charley Pickett's life. Now he was in walking distance to a couple of stores. Nearly every day you could see Charley with some of his dogs following him (he always kept two or more dogs) walking up to the Miles stores. Mr. Thomas Alsop who ran the store, was very kind to him. Charley would buy what few small items he wanted. Mr. Alsop would give him a stale newspaper to read. Charley took an interest in what was going on, especially at election time. One time when he was in the store, he made an uncomplimentary remark about President Wilson. Mrs. Afflick, who happened to be standing close by, grabbed Charley and pushed him out of the store. He tripped over the step and went a sprawling. It didn't hurt Charley, but everyone had a good laugh about it. Charley steered clear of Mrs. Afflick after that.

The years seemed to race by, and soon Charley Pickett was an old man. He got someone to help him and he moved from his old shack to a small tool shed on the Newton road. There was useable water at this place and it was nearer to the store. This was about 1924. He lived there a short time, and

then H. P. Hansen moved him over to a small frame house nearer his home. H. P. looked after Charley constantly. One time I bought some coal and Hansen hauled it to him. Charley always burned sage brush and scraps of lumber that he could find. Now he was unable to accumulate any brush or scraps and he appreciated this coal very much.

One day H. P. found Charley in very bad shape. He called Dr. G. L. Reese. Dr. Reese took Charley to the Logan Hospital, where he died a few days later.

The funeral was held in the First Ward Church in Smithfield, Utah. The speakers at the funeral were his old friend Archie Stewart, my Uncle H. C. Peterson, and myself. There were some flowers. He was buried in the Smithfield Cemetery. Charley's grave went unmarked for a few years—when Howard Bingham was Mayor of Amalga, the town board put a nice stone marker at his grave—a fine gesture.

(This was published in the Herald Journal Newspaper)



Mother Ellen Ash Peterson, daughters Ada Peterson England, standing; Beena Peterson Gabrielson, sitting

THE PETERSON HOMESTEAD

This old rustic farm home* still stands, and is lived in by an old couple, Odell and Audrey Smith.

The middle room was built in the early spring of 1890. The two west rooms were built in 1892 and 1893. I can remember playing with scraps of the lumber, the only toys I had at that time. Another room and a summer kitchen were added to the east. A lean-to on the north contained a hall entrance, quite a large pantry and steps that went down to a large dirt cellar.

The roof of the cellar was slabs covered with dirt. There was a small window just above ground to the north. Dad Used to whitewash it completely. It was always quite cool. There were shelves to keep milk and butter, etc., and a sturdy table where Mother made cheese and butter.

Dad improved the home in 1913. He added a cement porch, supported by six columns. It has been painted several times. It still presents a cozy, respectable appearance.

It seems like a sacred place to me. It was here I lived from 1891 until 1912, when I married. The only break was some winters when Dad moved the family to Logan for school.

Those who lived in the home from 1890 were: Mother and Dad and their children, Ada, Leslie, Myrtle and Beena. Also Austin, Oliver and Nephi, sons by Dad's first marriage and Eugene Nelson, a son by Mother's first marriage. The boys had all left by 1902, except Leslie who remained with Dad.

Written by J. Leslie Peterson

August 15, 1987 (age, 98)

A Christmas to Remember

As in most families, Christmas is the most important day in the year. This was so in our family especially when the children were very young. There was always a tree and some house decoration. Stockings were hung on chairs or pinned to the table cloth.

It seems I can still hear Beena Marie, Marjorie and Burnes standing at the head of the stairs, "Momma, Daddy, isn't it time now." There wasn't much sleep that night before Christmas. But what gleeful sounds of joy and happiness when morning finally did come. It is times like these that live in memory as long as life lasts.

In the year 1920, my wife, Ilarene and I, had four children: Louise, 7 years; Alice and Maurice "Bud", twins, 4; Ellen the baby not quite 2 years. We lived in three rooms—two large rooms and a kitchen. The two rooms are still part of this old farm house.

Now it was December—snow 2 ft. deep. It was quite cold; Christmas wasn't far away. Ila hadn't been feeling very well for some time. We had planned on a trip to town to do some Christmas shopping when she felt better. Her health didn't improve. The doctor came to our home and wanted to take Ila to the Budge Hospital. He said she needed an operation. It was decided to wait until after Christmas.

It seemed that time passed very fast. One evening Ila said, "Day after tomorrow is Christmas, what are we going to do? Nothing in the house for the little ones." We spent some time

planning. It was decided I would drive the bob sled to Smithfield, tie the team up and take the electric interurban car to Logan to do some Christmas shopping; take a northbound car back to Smithfield. I told Ila I would go if Louise could come with me. She was our oldest, 7 years. She was a big help to her Mother while she was so ill, especially. She had already skipped a grade in school—always a good student. I felt secure with her along on this shopping trip. It was quite an adventure for both of us, because Ila had always done most of the shopping. Ila gave Louise a list, we both depended on her.

The next morning I was up long before daylight; did what chores were necessary. I hooked up old blonde and molly onto the bob sled. It had a deep wagonbed. I placed some bright straw in the bottom, put the seat low to protect Louise and I from the cold breeze. We were really bundled up and were quite comfortable. In less than an hour we were in Smithfield. I stopped the sleigh on Center Street just a little way from the Depot, unhooked the horses and tied them to the sleigh box. In a very short time we were on the electric train going to Logan.

It was a new experience for Louise, she had never been on a train. In just a few minutes we were in Logan. We had a little more than three hours to do our Christmas shopping. We were really a couple of busy animated ones. We went into several stores; finally we chose Woolworth's. It seemed it had most everything we wanted. A nice lady took quite a shine to Louise. She showed the clerk the list. I don't

remember all the items. There was a nice doll for Allie, some crayons for Bud, several picture books for the twins, a Raggedy Ann doll for Ellen, a pencil set, and story book for Louise. There were some other small items—I can't remember them all. There was a small table imitation Christmas tree decorated.

After Woolworth's, we went into Murdock Candy kitchen and bought some candy, several kinds of peanuts, walnuts, etc.; also some oranges. The next stop was Quails store. Here we bought some nice house slippers for Ila. Louise picked out a pretty tie and some handkerchiefs for me. We were all set. Needless to say, we were both loaded down with bundles. We made our way to the Interurban Depot on 1st South and soon were on the electric train headed north for Smithfield. It was now nearly dark. I hooked up the team, bundled up, and were on our way for home, Christmas Eve, December 24, 1920.

After a long and exciting day, I was tired and Louise was almost exhausted. Soon after supper she was asleep in her bed. The twins, Bud and Alice, Ellen the baby, were all sleeping soundly. Ila and I played Santa Claus. She put a bright table cloth on the round table. We place the pretty little tree in the center. The stockings were all filled with candy, nuts and an orange. The stockings were pinned to the table cloth with each one's name. The presents were by each stocking. With the lamp light shining on it all, it really looked beautiful to us. It was a Christmas day we talk about and will always remember.

A few days after the Christmas holidays, I took the family to Logan. Arrangements were made with relatives

to take care of the children. It was sure a trying time. Ila was operated on in the Budget Hospital. The doctors were G. L. Reese, D. C. and T. B. Budge. This was before the time of blood transfusing or antibiotic medicines. Ila was considered critical the first two weeks. She was in the hospital 27 days. During this time I was very busy looking after the family. Ellen stayed in Lewiston with the Wm. Waddoups family. My parents were in Florida for the winter, so my sister, Beena, her husband Dr. Wendel Merrill and I took possession of the home on South, 4th West. We moved Ila there when she was able to leave the hospital. Of course, we were anxious to move back to the farm, our home in Amalga. She was still very weak from the operation. The weather was quite cold. Days passed. It was nearing springtime. Now it was the 1st of March. I made several trips out to the farm to check things over. One day I stopped at H. P. Hanson's. His oldest daughter, Christina, was there. I asked her if she could go up to our place, straighten it up a bit, as we were moving back in a few days to the farm. Christina knew the trouble we had. I explained to her some of what had happened to the family during the winter. Christina said she would be glad to help us. I gave her the key to the house, and told her I would call her on the phone and tell her the day and about the time we would arrive. A few days passed. Now we were ready to return. In the evening I called Christina. I told her we would be out the next day about noon. She said she would have the house warm for us. We were happy to be going home. When we arrived, Christina was standing in the kitchen doorway. She was nice and neat. I have thought about this many times since. She looked like an angel to

me. The house was shining "spic and span". All the bedding had been out airing in the warm spring sunshine. She had a lovely meal all cooked and ready to serve. She stayed a few days with us until Ila was ready to take over. Ila and I will never forget such loving kindness. We will always love and respect Christina.

(Published in the Valley Section of the Herald Journal, December 21, 1981)

By J. Leslie Peterson

Age 91 years

December 15, 1980



Back Row L to R
Colleen Hogge Adair
Christina Hansen Jacobs
Front
Clara Hansen Hogge
J. Leslie Peterson

The Story of Bear River

By J. Leslie Peterson

This district that is now Amalga was first known as the Smithfield Bend. Bear River followed the west side of Cache Valley until it reached a point south of Cornish. Here old Bear took a turn to the east nearly to the center of the valley, then south for several miles before it turned west again until it reached Bear River narrows west of Cache Junction. It was free range at that time.

While I am on this subject, it may be well to note (I have been told) that Bear River produces more electricity and power for its length and the amount of water than any river in the U.S.A. There are five dams and five generating plants on the river that I have been to.

Bear River flows through three states. It heads in the Uinta Mountains in Utah, then runs north through a portion of Wyoming, then west into Idaho north of Bear Lake. At this point a dam is built. It forms a large body of water which is called Mud Lake. This water can be turned into Bear Lake at the north end of the lake. Thus they can keep the lake at a more constant level. The next dam is at Soda Point. The next dam I have been to is Oneida in Bear River Narrows north of Preston. There is only about thirty feet of fall from Battle Creek, north and west of Preston until it reaches Cutler Dam west of Cache Junction, a distance of approximately thirty miles. Here a hard formation of rock known as quartzite is found. This formation has kept the river from eroding more deeply

through the valley from time immemorial. The Cuter Dam is built at this point.

The Utah Power & Light procured an easement on all the low bottom land, thus it can control the flow of water. Whey they keep it so high I do not know. It backs the water up a distance of about twelve miles.

I am telling about Bear River because I grew up along it banks. In my young days it was a part of my life. The water was not polluted then as it is today. There wasn't much vegetation along its banks, only hawthorn and water willows. After the high water receded about the first of June it was a delightful place for fishing and swimming. We caught some native trout, herring, and numerous chubs. There was no catfish or carp until about 1905. Too bad they were ever planted. What fish may be caught now I don't think would be fit for human consumption.

I was baptized in the river on my eighth birthday, August 27, 1897, by Elder Ludwick Larsen. There were quite a few baptisms in the river in those days.

There were some tragic things that happened on old Bear River. It used to be said that it claimed one life by drowning every year. One early such experience happened in 1895. I was six years old. Alto school district had been formed and a nice large one-room school house constructed on the Newton road by the clay slough. This building was also used to hold church services as it was the only public building in the community. It was late summer. I had gone with my parents to

Sunday School. When the meeting was over two boys about my age told me where we could get some water melons. This was a great temptation. Some of the older boys had gone up to Bear River and waded across and stole several large melons from a patch that belong to a man by the name of Cash. We three six year olds started across the field in the direction of Bear River. My dear Mother happened to see us wandering off and came running after us. She grabbed me and took me back to the school house. Mother tried to get the other boys to come back. When we reached the school house she told the boys' mothers. By this time the boys were out of sight and no one went to find them. They didn't come home that night. The next day everyone in the small community was out looking for them. They looked along the river and found their clothes on the bank. Footprints in the sand showed where they had entered the water. It was evident that they were both drowned.

Ferdinand Christensen was found the first day. Alphein Hjiltie was not found for nine days. The body had floated about five miles. It was so decomposed that all they did was wrap it in some canvas. They held an open air service. I have always given my Mother credit for saving my life.

On July 24, 1932, another tragic drowning happened—Emerson Hall. Emerson's parents moved to Smithfield in the 1920 period. He and our son Bud met at school in Smithfield. Emerson and Bud became fast friends. They went hunting, fishing and swimming constantly. Bud was the best swimmer, although Emerson was learning fast. My wife, Ila, and I had planned on a

family trip to Bear Lake for the 24th. We left Louise, our oldest, home with Grandma. On our way to Smithfield we met Emerson walking out to Amalga to see Bud. We tried to get Emerson to go with us, but the boys decided to stay home and go fishing and swimming. Bud said he would milk the cows in the evening, so we went on to Bear Lake and had a delightful day. We returned home about 11 p.m. We could see the lights down on the water. I knew instantly that someone had drowned. Mrs. Hall and her sister and husband, the Phillips, were there. Their anguish and sorrow at such a loss was pathetic to see. Emerson's body was found the next day. Bud has never liked swimming or fishing since that day.

Footnote: Bear River will never be the same beautiful, placid old stream again that I knew in the 1890s and early 1900s. The dams and the constant fluctuation of the stream causes the water to remain muddy and silted the year around. I read that an effort in the making to restore it to some semblance of its former grandeur is now being attempted by the environmentalists. This can never be. We will just have to forget the past as long as the dams and the fluctuation of the stream continue.

The Utah Power & Light has done an admirable job of harnessing all the water of Bear River. This benefits everyone—even those who use the water for irrigation. All of the flow of Bear River is used for irrigation with the exception of the extreme spring runoff. This amounts to nearly one million acre feet in some years. I understand there are more dams on the drawing boards intended to impound this run off. This is intended to

create more water for irrigation, also to create more power.

Where there is progress there is also destruction. Nearly all of the bottom land from the Custer Dam to Riverdale, Idaho, is worthless as farm land—hundreds of acres of this bottom land

used to produce crops. Example: one year my son Maurice R. (Bud) Peterson produced 2200 bales of alfalfa hay on 20 acres of river bottom. Another year he raised 900 bushels of grain. This land now has grown up to scrub cottonwood, black willows and sand burrs due to the flooding.



Mother & Dad 1950s

THE WEATHER

The weather has always played a major role in activities of mankind (remember the flood). We are still plagued with it. I am now going to tell you how it affected some people way back in the later part of the eighteen hundreds.

In the early eighteen eighties, saw mills in Logan Canyon were going strong. It was September, rather cool and frosty. They always operated the mills until winter drove them back to Logan. On about the twentieth of September it turned cold and snowed. This stopped all sawing activities. Needless to say, the only thing to do was to get out of the hills before it got worse. Within a week all the mills were deserted.

The weather stayed cold, many nights were below zero. It stayed this way through October, then a sudden change, and by the first part of November all the snow was gone, and an Indian Summer set in. There was some talk of moving back up the canyon and continuing operation, but it was too late in the year for such an effort.

My Dad, Pete (Lars Peter Peterson), and his brother-in-law, Ed (Edward Elija Hesikah Holden), worked together every summer for seven years at the saw mill in Logan Canyon.

Dad and Uncle Ed decided now that the weather was so nice, to go back up to the mill and chop down some pine trees, log and trim them. This would speed up saw mill operations the next spring. Another thing, pine cut down in the fall and winter when the sap was down was easier to saw and made better lumber.

I used to do some hunting in the twenties and thirties, and I saw stumps six to eight feet tall that had been harvested when the snow was so deep in the winter.

Dad and Uncle Ed hired a lumber driver who had a good team and wagon, to take them up to the saw mill. They loaded his wagon with lumber to take down, and told him to come back for them in about ten days. They pitched a tent in Peterson Hollow near the white pine forest, and were soon chopping and sawing down trees.

Dad told me most of the trees were fifty to seventy feet tall and two to three feet at the butt. To cut down three or four trees a day, trim the limbs and saw them into twenty-foot lengths was a big day's work. They made wonderful progress, and this would give the saw-mill a good start when it began to operate in the spring.

One afternoon a cold wind came up. It began to snow so they quit work and went to the tent. They made a fire in the small iron stove they had installed, ate some supper and went to bed. They could hear the snow pelting against the canvas tent. The weight of the snow pushed the tent right down on where they were trying to sleep.

When it was light, they pushed the snow off the tent, and decided to wait the storm out. It snowed hard all that day. It was a bleak situation. They knew no one could come to rescue them from Logan as it was twenty six miles over a rocky dirt road covered with four feet of

snow drifts. They decided they must make an effort to walk out.

They had good warm clothes, warm leather boots and gloves, provisions that would last three or four days. Uncle Ed said, "Pete, if we only had some snow shoes, I believe we could make it." There was a shop at the mill where they kept all the tools and extra supplies. There was everything needed for the job.

Uncle Ed, besides being about the best saw mill operator in the canyon, was an expert carpenter. Within a little more than a day he had built snow shoes that proved practicable. Dad had helped, he cut strips from a tanned deer hide to tie them onto their leather boots.

They were afraid the weather would turn cold; as long as it kept snowing it was quite warm. At daylight they started out for Logan. If ever two men faced a perilous situation, with the threat of avalanches and below zero weather, it was Dad and Uncle Ed.

The first day they made it down to the Beaver Landing, across the wooden bridge on Logan River, and down to about where the Tony Grove Ranger Station is now. They camped that night in the lea of a large pine tree. Uncle Ed found some dry material by a log and built a fire. They huddled together and slept fitfully. At daybreak they were on their way again.

The threat of slides was on both sides of the canyon. They could hear the roar of some way back in the hills. The going was very tough and exhausting. They would walk about a hundred yards then stop and rest for a little while. They

came to a steep hill on the right side of the canyon. Rocks along the river bank indicated that there had been slides in past winters. They decided to walk down the river in the water, rather than plow through the snow, as it didn't take much agitation to start the snow to sliding.

They walked past this danger point for about a half mile in the river. Needless to say, they were pretty well soaked. They had held the snow shoes and what provisions they had out of the water. They sat down on a rock, strapped their snow shoes on and plodded on. They had just started when they heard a noise behind them. It was an avalanche that had just missed them. It was a big one, rocks and brush were carried along with the force of the slide, a whirling mist of snow a hundred feet above it. The slide went clear into the river. In a few minutes there was complete silence. Dad describing it said it was the most awesome thing one could ever see. Uncle Ed said, "Pete, if luck like that will hold, I think we'll see home again."

The worst was over. One thing, the weather had turned warmer. If it had been freezing cold, it might have been a different story.

They plodded on. That night they stopped at a deserted saw mill. The bunk house had an iron stove. They built a fire in it and dried their clothes. Dad said it was wonderful to be warm and dry. They were very hungry after such a strenuous day, and ate most of the food they had left. Soon they were fast asleep in the bunk beds.

At daylight they were on their way again. The going was much easier now, as the

snow wasn't nearly as deep. After they passed the forks in Logan River, they stopped and took off their snow shoes so they could make better time. When night came they were about where the third dam is now. They found a dry spot under some bushes, sat down and waited for daylight. By noon they were out of the canyon. They were home.

The folks at home hadn't worried about Dad and Uncle Ed. They knew they were rugged souls and could take care of themselves. The storm in Logan had been quite mild. It had started to rain a little, and then turned to snow. It was quite warm for this time of year in Logan.

Shortly after Christmas there was a big change in the weather--more storm and then extreme cold. In fact, it was one of the worst winters in Cache Valley. It was late May or early June before they could get back up to the Peterson saw mill. There were still patches of snow, and evidence of the terrible snow slide.

Written by J. Leslie Peterson, age 96

The Story of Chancy Hansen (and Bingham's, Woods' & Curtises')

*Written by J. Leslie Peterson in his 100th
Year*

Time passes. I get bored. It seems I can remember the past quite well. I have decided to write some sketches without removing the scabs and warts like so many people do.

I first saw Chancy Hansen when I was about nine years old. He was watering his horses at the coral pump. There were two surface wells on the ranch at that time. It was excellent water. It hadn't been polluted then. That was before irrigation and so many wells and livestock.

At about this time in my story—1896 or 1897—all the available land for homesteads was taken. The talk now was Idaho: Eagle Rock, now Idaho Falls and the Snake River Company. There was plenty of land available in Montana and Oregon just begging to be homesteaded. It was an interesting time in the development of the West.

Chancy was born in Texas. He was a big man, over six feet tall. He had a handle bar mustache, but otherwise was clean shaven. His clothes showed signs of had wear. On the other hand, there was an aura of neatness about him. His little wife was just a wisp of a woman. She had a very hard and difficult life. Chancy met her in Abilene, Texas. About this time is when the historic cattle drives from the plains of Texas north to Dodge City or wherever they could meet the railroads. It was sure a

rugged life. Many stories have been written about these adventures.

Chancy and his wife had four children when they left Texas. They were Chancy, Jr., about ten (about my age), a girl three or four and a three month old nursing baby.

Chancy had been a cowboy. He had been on cattle drives and worked as a blacksmith. In fact, he had a lot of skills.

When they left Texas it was early spring. When they stopped at the ranch, in what is now Amalga, it was hot summer time. They were traveling for nearly five months. Chancy said they had no schedule; some days only a few miles. If there was good grazing for the horses, plenty of water and trees for shade, they sometimes stayed for several days. They traveled alone. He said he had many offers to team up with a caravan but he was sure a loner.

He told Dad he would like to "hole up" for a while and rest. Dad told him he was sure he could find an abandoned place somewhere he could stop. They had hardly gone a miles from the Peterson ranch until he came to a log house. It seemed practically new, well built of square sawed logs with two large rooms, shingled roof, a pine floor and a brick chimney. It was really build so much nicer than most of the log houses that were built then. Of course, when Chancy saw it, he went and investigated—no lock on the doors, not a soul around, no traffic anywhere. He told his wife we will stop here tonight. In fact, they lived there for more than three long years.

Now the question: who did the log house belong to and who owned the land it was built on? That brings another story—the Bingham's. Willard Bingham and one of his oldest sons, Parley Pratt Bingham, took up two homesteads shortly after my Dad did in 1876. The Bingham's lived in Ogden—they often referred to Wilson Lane. It was in the north part of Ogden. They had homes there and farmed some land.

Both Willard and his son Parley were polygamists. In 1888, the United States passed a law against polygamy the way the Mormon Church was practicing it. It was the Edmonds Tucker Law. Every man who was living with more than one woman was threatened with arrest and imprisonment. Of course this was like a bomb-shell to Mormondom and the territory of Utah. Utah was not a state until 1896. Soon there were U. S. Marshals and local deputies arresting polygamists and sending them to prison. The prison was located at Sugar House in Salt Lake City. History records there was panic among the polygamists. Some fled in all directions to escape going to prison. Willard with his young wife, Clara Smith and his son Parley Pratt Bingham, fled to Mexico where there was no law against more than one wife. This is the reason the nice log house was abandoned.

It seems that Willard and his son didn't like Mexico. Soon they were back at their old stand in North Ogden. The government raid was still on and deputies were still arresting some polygamists, so Willard took his wife Clara (they had one or two children by this time) and fled to Wyoming. They kept going until they stopped at a small

place called Wilson, located a few miles west of Jackson. They must have stayed at Wilson for some time as Clara had another baby, LeRoy S. Bingham. The next we hear of Willard, he was back in Ogden.

Chancy Hansen settled down in the log house with his wife and four children just like he owned the place. To this day I have never found out if any arrangement was made with Willard or anyone regarding the place. Soon there was a small shed where he kept his horses. He boarded up the open well and started clearing the sage brush around the log house and to the west. I remember seeing him plowing some of the land he had cleared with a little walking plow.

Being a small child in 1898 (nine years old) I was interested in farm animals. I used to ride everywhere and there were always ponies to ride at the ranch. Chancy was a keen trader. Soon he had three horses. Some of the things he got I don't know how he did it: a brand new farm wagon with a springset and brakes, a new plow and iron harrow, a new grain drill, new harness. It seemed like he was always bringing new things home to the log house. I think they lived well. Nearly anyone could buy anything on time if they had a little money to pay down. Chancy had worked for Dad a couple of seasons during harvest time. He was a good hand with horses and mules and understood farm implements. He ran Dad's hired crew so well he was paid a little more than the common hired help. Chancy was a kind of mystery to his neighbors. He kept his own council but that he had a plan, he told no one.

I heard my uncle tell Dad that Chancy can never pay for all the stuff he had bought. He must own hundreds of dollars. Uncle Chris said Chancy owed the stores. It is strange how so many would trust him.

Don't worry, the climax is coming. I must write something about Frank Wood. He lived in a log house north and east of where Chancy lived in Willard's log house. I think they were quite friendly. Frank was born in Austin, Nevada. Joseph Wood went to Nevada to get away from the Mormons. The story goes in the 1870s he moved back to Utah and settled in a homestead in Trenton. Here he raised his large family and became quite a successful dry farmer. He entered into community life. He was a great reader. He advocated the building of the West Cache Canal and was on the first Board of Directors. His oldest son graduated from Amherst College in Massachusetts. He is now referred to as the father of the West Cache Canal. His name was Charles G. Wood.

In early September, Frank Wood came riding down the road on a horse. He wanted to see Pete, my Dad. This is about the way the talk went. "Pete, have you seen Chancy lately?" Dad said, "I saw him last week trailing an old single buggy behind his new wagon." Dad said, "He sure has a lot of stuff he can never pay for." Frank said Chancy has gone. They must have left in the night. Willard's log house looked just like it did when they moved in about three years ago. Did Chancy get away with this? Well, he did. There were covered wagons moving about in every direction. Which way did Chancy go? Some thought maybe back to Texas. In

one long dark night with a fresh team he could easily be 15 or 20 miles on his way.

In a week or so word got around that Chancy was gone. The implement houses and stores owed were frantic. To this day I don't believe any ever found out where Chancy had gone. Of course I was disappointed. Young Chancy and Frank were my playmates. After the high water in the early spring, Bear River was a beautiful place to fish and swim. At that time the river had not been polluted. The fish we caught were good and there were some nice trout and herring. This idealistic time came to an end when Chancy and family moved away. Many years passed and I found out where Chancy had moved to.

SEQUEL

As a youth I had a cousin, Harvey B. Curtis. He lived in Logan, Utah. Needless to say, we were dear friends and were together whenever we could arrange it. Mother's sister, Emily, married George Curtis. He was a son of Ben Curtis who moved with his wife and large family in the early 1880s from Grand Rapids, Michigan. Why they moved to Utah I never knew. The Curtis family was all bright, intelligent, good looking and always good company. My Uncle George worked as a surface pump man. This was a good business in that nearly every home in Logan had a well. The water was good; later the water became polluted, so the first Logan water works were established. My dear Aunt Emily was an expert seamstress so they did quite well. They built a new three-room frame house on a portion of the lot where my Grandfather lived. They lived there

quite a number of years. Here three boys were born to them: George, Leo and Harvey. The two oldest were quite close, only a little over a year apart. Harvey was not born for some years later.

Time passed and it seemed due to the expense of the family, they lost their home. I can remember they were in rented places. Uncle George seemed to desert the family. He was always looking for that pot of gold. He told me once when he was quite old that he had expected to be a millionaire before he died. Poor Aunt Emily, she and the boys would have starved if it hadn't been for Mother and Dad. The ranch was beginning to produce and so they always supplied Aunt Emily with food. It seemed every time they went to Logan they always took something to Aunt Emily. (Reader, remember this was life before the turn of the century.)

One day Aunt Emily received a letter from Uncle George. It was postmarked St. Louis, Missouri. It seemed my Uncle Rast was with him. They had runaway together. They were away for over a year. When they returned, Uncle George had a wad of money. How he obtained it, no one ever found out. He moved in with Aunt Emily and she accepted him. For a short while they were a family again. Not for long, the friction between Uncle George and George Jr. was so intense that he and Leo ran away. They caught a freight train at Cache Junction and went north to Pocatello, Idaho.

In Idaho they had relatives. The relatives were J. W. (Johnny) Ash, Aunt Emily's brother, and his wife Aunt Tilly. They had three children, Ada, Levi, and Clemont, George and Leo's cousins.

There was also Uncle Dan Felsted and his wife Anna. Aunt Anna was adopted by my step-grandmother, Ellen Lundblad Ash. Anna grew up in Logan with Mother and Aunt Emily. Our real grandmother, Sophia Edwards Ash, who walked across the plains in 1856, died in Richmond, Utah in 1863. This was a great trial to Grandfather Ash. As a young man in England, he had been married twice. Both of these wives died in child birth. Before germs were discovered, they called it child bed fever.

At this time Pocatello was a railroad center. It seemed everybody worked for the Union Pacific. Uncle Johnny was an expert carpenter and cabinet maker. He worked for the Union Pacific repairing and making railroad equipment. He helped George and Leo get some kind of work.

About this time in my story, I was on the ranch with my folks. All my brothers had left the ranch. Eugene had married and moved to Newton. Austin and Oliver were in Rexburg, Idaho working in the carpenter trade. Nephi had joined the U. S. Infantry and was in the Philippine Islands. The Peterson ranch was a dry farm consisting of 560 acres. Amalga at that time had no name. From 1897 when Alto school left until 1916-17 when the Amalgamated Sugar Factory was built, west of the road it was in the Newton precinct and east of the road it was the Smithfield precinct.

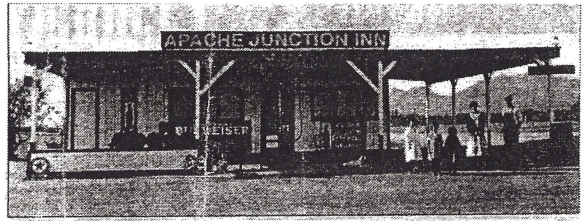
What a lonely place. No wonder all my brothers left the dry farm. My sister Ada hated it. Myrtle was just a baby and Beena wasn't born at that time.

Of course on a place that big there was always a lot of work. At an early age I became a good hand driving horses. As I grew up, I became Dad's right-hand man. Oliver and Nephi came back to the farm at short intervals and helped Dad and he had to hire a lot of help. When I started to write about Chancy Hansen, I have written so much about others and conditions that it will be like my autobiography.

George and Leo Curtis grew up in Pocatello. George married quite young a young woman named Ora. She was very pretty. The years rolled around and soon I seemed there were these beautiful little girls. Vanessa was the oldest, then Phyllis and the baby, Georgia. They were a family. George and his wife were very concerned bringing up a family of girls in a place like Pocatello. At that time it was a wide open town.

George had done well. He had been promoted and they were living well. He had a good car and a trailer. He decided to go on an exploring trip with the family. They loved to camp out and he had made arrangements for everything. He always carried in his trailer extra water and gasoline.

A car stopped. They were low on water. George spared them some. The road sign read Apache Junction. Apache Junction was nearly 40 miles from Mesa, Arizona. George got the idea that this would be a paying site for a service station. George hauled the first gasoline and water in milk cans. It sold like hot cakes and Apache Junction was started.



The earliest known photo of Apache Junctions taken in the spring of 1923. From left: Vanessa, Georgia, Phyllis, Auroro and George Curtis, the founding family of Apache Junction

My daughter Alice went to Apache Junction and stayed the summer of 1934 with the Curtis family. The time from the late teens or early 20s of 1900 was the period when George and Ora Curtis first camped at Apache Junction. In 1934 when Alice was there (about 18 years later), this is the way she described it: There was a café, a big house, gas pumps, a zoo, a snake pit and several small cabins. It was the only place with good well water within a fifty-mile radius. There was also a curio shop which George hired a man and woman to run for him. They sold all sorts of Indian items, blankets, jewelry, etc. Allie said the restaurant was really quite elaborate. Some days it took four girls to wait on the tables. He had a long list of autographs of noteables who dined there, actors and political people. George also sold water to road construction crews.

The Superstition Mountain was just to the east of Apache Junction. The legend of the fabulous Lost Dutchman Mine is still going the rounds to this day. By 1934 many changes had taken place within the family. The three girls had been educated in a fine boarding school in Phoenix. Vanessa, the oldest, had married and was living in California north of San Francisco in a place call Mill Valley. They were across the then new Golden Gate Bridge.

There was never a dull moment around George Curtis, Jr. If there was ever a "wheeler dealer", he was it. When he first started to build at Apache Junction, he went into Phoenix and filed on a homestead. So George Curtis owned Apache Junction lock, stock and barrel. He had paid some taxes. This helped make it binding. Apache Junction had become quite a tourist attraction.

Of course, world events change people everywhere. When Hitler marched into Poland in the fall of 1939, it was the beginning of World War II. In just a couple of years the Japanese had attacked Pearl Harbor. We now find George and Ora Curtis living in a small bungalow at Manhattan Beach, California, just south of Los Angeles. He and Ora had sold Apache Junction.

My Uncle George Curtis, Sr. and Aunt Emily had a fourth child rather late in their productive life—a beautiful baby girl. The family was delighted, but sad to say, she only lived a little over a year. Her name was Clara. Needless to say, this broke up the family ties.

The next I remember of Uncle George and Aunt Emily, they had moved to Montana to a place named Big Timber. Harvey, being about 12 years old, went with them. I missed him very much. I didn't see Harvey again for nearly 20 years. Aunt Emily lived in Big Timber for several years. They moved back to Utah. Harvey now was a carpenter, married and doing well. We finally met after all this time in about 1920. Harvey told me of working with a man, CHANCY HANSEN! He told Harvey his life story. They were amused to find I was Harvey's cousin and that Chancy,

Jr. had been my playmate for the three years he lived in the log house. It was 1899 when Chancy, Sr., pulled out one dark night. They never stopped traveling for about a month until they reached Big Timber, Montana. Chancy, Jr. said he never realized what it was all about until he was much older. Thus, I think that maybe I am the only person who really knows where Chancy Hansen finally settled down—Big Timber, Montana.

Immigrants
The Story of My Two Great Uncles
By J. Leslie Peterson

They came from foreign lands. It was referred to as "the Old Country". They came from England, mostly—the Scandinavian countries and other parts of Europe. I am referring to the early Mormon exodus—the 1840 to 1870 time of immigration. Many Utah residents can trace their lineage back to this period.

Many came for religions sake alone. There was also the inducement of a new land, a new nation, more opportunity, a place to expand and use their talents. Also, as soon as they joined a new religion they were shunned by their friends and neighbors. Sometimes their own relatives turned their backs on them. Just to be with those who believed as they did was the great desire that prompted them to come to Zion.

My father was the late L. P. Peterson. He had two uncles, Nels Jensen and Jim Larsen. Why their names were different was due to an old Danish custom, although they were full brothers. In about 1870, when the Indian scare was over, the two brothers decided to take up a homestead. There was plenty of vacant land then. Uncle Nels took up a claim in west Cornish along the foothills. A survey had been made along the west side of the valley. A small canal from Weston Creek furnished some irrigation water; enough for a garden and a few trees. Most of the land was dry farm. It was here he raised his family of five girls and two sons. They were all grown by the time I came along.

Fritz and Alfred, the two sons, lived out their lives in this same locality. The girls all married and moved away from Cornish with the exception of Mary, who married Ben Bingham. He was a prominent pioneer of that district. He helped in the construction of the West Cache canal. He was also the first Bishop of that district. Mary and Ben had a nice family of six boys and one girl. They are all gone now with the exception of Gilbert. He lives in Hyrum.

Uncle Nels was known as Potter Jensen. In his youth he learned to make crockery pots. It was an old art. He had all of the equipment and knew how to glaze them. They were very pretty and useful. They were used by house wives for preserving fruit, storing cream and for yeast jars. Of course, being clay and easily broken, I doubt that any are now in existence. Uncle Nels made some extra money in this business.

As a small boy I went with Uncle Nels and Dad down west of his home and he showed us his lathes and how he fashioned the different containers. He stacked them just so in the kiln, then they were heated by fire just like they used to make brick. Uncle Nels was a very devout Christian. I knew him as a kindly old gentleman.

Although Nels and Jim were poles apart, especially in their religious views, as brothers they always respected each other and were very close.

Uncle Nels was about ten years older than Uncle Jim. Nels came to Utah with his sister, Mary, in 1860. Mary married my grandfather Peter Nels Peterson in

Denmark. They had three children when they immigrated. Jim had remained in Denmark with his parents. His father was not a member of the Church. In fact he was very much opposed to it. He died soon after all of the rest of the family had immigrated to Utah. This left only Jim and his mother alone in Denmark. Jim was only about twelve years old. His mother had a difficult time due to the opposition to the Church. Even old friends refused to speak to her or Jim. Her husband's relatives shunned them. What to do? Jim's mother was almost fanatical in her devotion to the Mormon faith. She read the Bible to Jim every day. Jim seemed more concerned about something to eat.

The mother decided she must get enough money some way to buy a passage on a ship for New York. She was lucky. She got a job working for a well-to-do Danish family as a domestic servant. She was well and strong and very capable. The pay was small, but it kept she and Jim from starving. She saved every penny possible. In the evenings she read all the Church pamphlets and the Bible constantly. One evening she came across this scripture in Luke 18:28-30. "Then Peter said; Lo, we have left all, and followed thee. And He said unto them. Verily I say unto you. There is no man that hath left house or parents or brethren or wife or children for the kingdom of God's sake who shall not receive manifold more in this present time, and in the world to come, life everlasting."

When Jim's mother read this it gave her an idea. She wanted to obey all of the scriptures. She counted her savings and went down to the dock where the ships departed for the "new world", as

some people called it, or America. She found out that she had saved enough for one passage to New York, plus a little extra, but not enough for two passages.

She found that a ship was leaving in about three days. Could she tell Jim? No! She never had the heart to. She devised another plan. She would wait until the last moment when the ship set sail. No, there was another way.

When the day came for their departure, Jim was beside himself with joy. To go across the great Atlantic Ocean to a new world! He helped his mother pack the big valise. There were two smaller ones. They left the old room that had been their home in plenty of time. The mother knew exactly the time the ship was to set sail. When they arrived at the dock where the ship was it seemed that everyone was in a hurry. The gang plank was down and some of the passengers were already boarding the ship. The mother left Jim to watch their valise and approached one of the attendants and talked to him for a minute or two. Jim could not hear what they were talking about. She came back to where Jim was and told him there would be quite a delay. She told her son she just remembered that she had forgotten to pack the tin box that contained all of her keepsakes, and what few valuables she had. She told Jim to go back to the room and get it. He didn't want to leave, but the mother insisted. Jim had always obeyed her so he started back to where they had lived. As it was quite a distance, he ran all of the way. Jim searched where she told him the box was. It wasn't there. He looked everywhere but couldn't find it. This took longer. More time passed. Jim was worried so he ran all the way

back to the dock. It was almost deserted! Where was the ship? He looked out over the water, and in the distance he could see the smoke from the ship. He was supposed to be on it!

Was it a bad dream! He could hardly believe what he saw. It must be some horrible mistake. His mother had always been so kind to him. He started to cry and sob. He kept it up until he was nearly exhausted. A man came up to Jim and asked him what the trouble was. Jim told him all about it. He was supposed to be on that ship. The man said, "I don't think so. The woman you called your mother only had one passage. I know because I check everyone that gets on the boat." (I heard Uncle Jim tell these events many times.)

The dock was now almost deserted. It was evening. The events of the day had so exhausted Jim—he had cried until he could not cry any more. He finally wandered back to the one room that had been their home. It was now dark. He found a candle and lit it. What a forlorn place. There was nothing to eat. He fell on the cot that was his bed and fell asleep. When he awoke it was light. He was cold and hungry. He went outside. It was a cold time of the year. He slowly walked down the path and down the road. He didn't want to beg for food. An old couple that lived close by saw Jim and wondered what had happened. The man said, "I thought you would be half way to America by now. What happened?" Jim told the neighbor exactly what had taken place. The man remarked, "Well, I'll be darned. I guess that was on account of that crazy religion she took up with." He could see Jim's condition. He said,

"What are you going to do now?" Jim told him, "I just don't know." Now as a rule the Danes are real charitable to one another when they are down and out. Although they were on the poorer side, they took Jim in and gave him something to eat. An arrangement was made. Jim was to help the man with some work around the place for his board. He could sleep in the room that was near by. Jim was very thankful. The hurt of being deserted by his mother seemed to grow as the days went by. He finally decided that he hated his mother and the religion that she followed. Although Jim lived to be an old man he never changed his mind.

In his spare time, he would go down to the dock and watch the ships come and go. He longed to go on one that was going to America.

One day Jim saw some men loading some cattle on one of the large sailing vessels. He was curious. He asked the men where they were going. They said they were going to America. Jim said quietly, "I wish that I was going with you." The man in charge of the cattle said, "Young man, do you really mean that?" Jim assured him that he did. He explained that all of his relatives had immigrated to America a year ago—his sister and brother, and that there wasn't enough money to buy a passage for him. Jim didn't want to tell him how his mother had deserted him.

The man said, "You must be here tomorrow at ten o'clock prepared to board ship. "Now young man, it won't be easy. These are special stock cows and heifers and a couple of bulls being shipped to a dairy farm close to New

York City. They must be fed and watered twice a day and kept clean.

Jim was delighted with the prospect. He thanked the old couple who had been so kind to him, and the next morning he was in time to board the ship. They were soon sailing through the English Channel, and in a couple of days they were out on the broad Atlantic.

At times Jim was sea sick. The man that helped Jim was also sick. The cattle didn't fair so well at times. They had to carry water to each cow twice a day, and give them just so much feed. It seemed that everything on a sailing vessel was always rationed. Jim also had to clean up the manure from the stock twice each day, carry it up the hatch and throw it over the side. It was a trying time for Jim. He became weak and thin, and could hardly drag himself through each day. The sea biscuits, after a couple of weeks, were moldy, and the water in the barrels smelled bad and tasted worse. Jim said he felt so low at times he wondered if he would live to see America. When they had been at sea about four weeks it rained very hard. The sailors arranged the sails so they saved quite a lot of rain water. Jim said it tasted wonderful. It also helped the stock. One morning, when they had been at sea nearly five weeks, he heard some one holler, "Land!" "Ho!" Jim ran up on deck, and in the distance he could see the land. In a little while he could see New York harbor and a faint outline of some buildings.

The ship soon docked at an unloading wharf. Jim helped the man lead the stock off the ship. They were loaded on large wagons that were horse drawn.

The man rode on one wagon and waved his hand to Jim and that was the last Jim ever say of him.

It seemed that the ship was soon deserted. Jim stood on the wharf alone. He was a sad looking young man. His clothes were filthy. The shoes were worn through. His pants were stiff with manure from his knees down. The jacket he wore was in rags, and the cap he wore looked like a dob of mud. Jim had never shaved. He had a fuzzy red beard. He was completely unwashed. But he had crossed the Atlantic Ocean, and this was America.

Jim slowly made his way up from the wharf onto a street near the harbor. There was quite a number of people walking back and forth in front of the shops. Some were dressed in blue uniforms. He didn't know the Civil War was on.

Before Jim's father died he attended school in Denmark. He remembered seeing a map of America in one of the school books. He knew it was fifteen hundred miles from New York to Zion in the Rocky Mountains near the Great Salt Lake. The task of traveling that great distance looked almost hopeless. Would his luck never change? He leaned against a rail to rest. He was very tired and hungry.

A couple of men approached and started talking to him. Jim didn't know a word of English. He said in Danish that he didn't know what they were saying. One man smiled and answered Jim in Danish. He said that where he lived there were mostly Danes—or Swedes, although he explained that he was American born. He stated that he was

Frank Herrington, and that he lived in Wisconsin. He had a wife and five children, and that he owned a large farm. Herrington asked Jim where he had been to get so dirty. Jim told him about the ship, the stock he tended, the awful sea sickness, moldy sea biscuits and stinking water they drank. Herrington asked where his folks were. Jim explained everything—that all of his relatives were in Utah and how his Mother had deserted him, that he was on his way to Utah and that he hoped to get there some day. No doubt Herrington was impressed with Jim's story. He asked Jim if he would come with him to Wisconsin. He said that he needed more help on his farm. Jim said he sure would like to go with him but that he looked so awful. Herrington said, "Come with me and we will fix that." He took Jim to a barber shop where they also gave hot baths. He told the barber to give Jim a good close hair cut and a shave. Also have him take a bath. "I will go next door to the clothing store and get the young man some new clothes."

What a revelation! What a change! The clothes fit perfectly and were very practical. There was a fine cap, also a big red bandana. After plenty to eat, a nights lodging in a fine hotel, Herrington, his partner a Mr. Swenson, and Jim boarded a passenger train and they were on their way to Wisconsin. The trip took more than a week. There were many delays. The Civil War was now on in full force, and the movement of troops and supplies had full priority. The last part of the trip was by stage.

The farm was situated in a beautiful setting. There were many small lakes and vast forests. The farm consisted of

several hundred acres. It was divided into paddocks and cropland. They were all fenced with small log fences. Little patches of timber had been left in some of the paddocks. The house was of log and frame. It was large, containing ten rooms. The living room contained a large fire place. There was a bunk house for the hired help, several barns and sheds. Everything about the place looked prosperous and well kept up.

Jim decided that Frank Herrington was a man of means. Also he was well respected by all of his neighbors. Jim said it was a pleasure to work for him. He tried to show by his work how much he appreciated everything. Mark, the oldest son, taught Jim all about the farm; how to saddle a horse, how to ride and rope cattle, the way they planted crops, repaired fences, etc. There was always plenty to do, and Jim said he enjoyed everything.

Plenty of good food, the exercise and regular hours Jim had developed into a strong young man. He said at that time he weighed one hundred eighty pounds and was exactly six feet tall.

Jim had been on the farm in Wisconsin about a year and six months. He was anxious to move on to Utah where his relatives were. He mentioned this desire to Mr. Herrington. The Civil War had not affected this locality very much. There were reports of battles fought and victories won, or battles lost on both the North and South sides. On Herrington's farm everything progressed about the same. Mr. Herrington told Jim he thought the War would be over soon, and that traveling over the Great Plains and through the Rocky Mountains would

be easier and safer then. He liked Jim and didn't like to part with him.

The very next day after this discussion, two Union soldiers on horseback came to the farm. Their uniforms indicated that they were important officers. They told Mr. Herrington that they were looking for young men to draft into the Union Army. Without much ceremony, both Jim and Mark were drafted into the Army. Mr. Herrington tried to protest, but it was no use. This was war. Jim and Mark were both placed in a cavalry division because they knew how to ride horses.

The Civil War had been in progress nearly three years. Casualties were terrific. Disease and infection of wounds took nearly as many as those killed in battle. Jim and Mark were placed in a unit that had been in many campaigns and had suffered severe losses. The young men were thrown into the fray with very little training. After one engagement when they regrouped, Mark did not return. Jim could only hope that maybe his mount had been killed or possibly he had been taken prisoner. Anyway, Jim never saw him again.

The cholera was everywhere. In Jim's unit half the men were affected. Only about one in four or five recovered. The rule was not to drink water. The disease developed a terrific thirst. Jim wandered away from the company up into a small ravine in the hills. He came across a small spring. The water was clear and cool. He said he decided that if he was going to die he might as well drink all he wanted. He said he must have drunk gallons. In a couple of days hunger turned to him. In a few weeks Jim had

completely recovered and was back with his unit again.

Then there was Gettysburg. Many historians consider this battle the greatest in the history of the world. The great battle lasted four furious days. The dead, wounded and dying were so many they literally touched one another. It has been said that it would have been possible to walk on dead men for quite a distance in many places of the battlefield. The smoke from the black powder used at that time hung like a cloud for many days over the great battlefield.

The result—the South was defeated. The North was exhausted. It hastened the end of the Civil War, and soon General Lee surrendered to General Grant at Appomattox and the war was over.

On the last afternoon of the battle at Gettysburg, Uncle Jim and the cavalry unit he was in were charging over the battlefield. They came to a wooden bridge, and in their haste to cross it, Jim and his horse were crowded off. They fell about fifteen feet to the creek bed below. Jim was unconscious for a long time. When he came to, the horse, dead, was laying across his legs. He couldn't move. Any effort caused him great pain. Night came on. He lay thus, sleeping fitfully until the next afternoon. He wondered if he was deaf. He could not hear the roar of battle anymore.

Men finally came and pushed the horse off of him. His right leg was broken. He was taken to a large tent set up as a field hospital. They were bringing the wounded from the battlefield by the dozens. Some were moaning. Some

were dying. They could only save a few. It was several days before they set Jim's leg and splinted it.

In a week Jim was on crutches. In a month he was walking a little. He was sent to headquarters where he was discharged from the Union Army. He was given a Springfield rifle, a couple of pistols and some clothing and a little money.

Jim's thoughts now turned to Utah—"Zion" as it was called--his sister, Mary, (my grandmother), his brother Nels, and other relatives. He decided to go to Wisconsin first to see the Herringtons. Maybe Mark had returned. He went to a railroad station to buy a ticket. Jim had purchased a large valise. It held all of his personal belongs: the guns, clothing, some trinkets and most of his money. He sat the valise down while he bought the ticket and talked to the agent a minute or so, and when he turned around the valise was gone! There were lots of people moving about. He looked everywhere, but he couldn't find it. He told an officer what had happened. The officer told him that there were bands of robbers everywhere, but they would do everything they could to help Jim. They looked around the station. Many people were moving about and night was coming on.

It was a sad disappointment for Jim. He had been a soldier for nearly two years. He had fought in many fierce battles. One mount was shot from under him. He had recovered from cholera and a broken leg. Many of his comrades were killed right beside him. But Jim was alive and well. He made up his mind

that he would overcome this set back some way and go on.

It was now pitch dark. He went into a tavern nearby and had a couple of stiff drinks of whiskey. He walked out into the night again. He kept on walking and was now in a forest. There were many paths. He soon discovered that he was completely lost. Not too far in the distance he could see a faint light. He followed it and came to a log house. He decided to ask for directions. He knocked on the door. A man opened it. He had a gun in his hand. He grabbed Jim and pulled him inside. There were six of them. He could tell they had been drinking heavily. Jim looked around the room. There were bottles of liquor and other articles on a shelf. Along one wall there was a pile of boxes and valises and Jim recognized his own valise among them.

Jim decided that if he could only get away from the place he could tell the police about it. Alone he could do nothing. They started asking him questions. He answered them in Danish. They looked at one another and shook their heads. They decided to kill him! Jim thought "this is it!" An idea came to his rescue. He knew how everybody feared cholera. It still prevailed in some places. Jim said, "I put my arms across my stomach and acted like I was in great pain. I guess I had turned white when they said they were going to kill me." One of them said, "What the hell's the matter with you?" I mumbled brokenly, "Cholera". They looked at one another. I think they reasoned that if they shot me they would have a dead man on their hands affected with cholera. One of them said, "Kick the S. B. out!" The door was

opened and I was pushed through it. I went sprawling. The door banged shut. I picked myself up and started to run as fast as I could. I found a path and followed it. Soon I was out of the woods. In the distance I could see the railroad station lights. I was soon explaining to the agent just what had happened. He believed me. He knew I was the one who had lost the valise. He must have been a man of some authority. Anyway, within an hour he had rounded up a bunch of men—about 20 police, some soldiers and some citizens. They were all well armed. I was delegated to lead them back to the cabin in the woods. There was still a faint light inside. The police busted in the door and rushed in. I think the thieves were sleeping off the effects of too much whiskey. Before they could hardly move they were disarmed. Their hands were tied behind their backs, and they were marched back to the railroad station. They were turned over to the proper authorities. A lot of plunder was recovered. My valise had never even been opened.”

“With new hope I was on my way again to go to Wisconsin to see the Herrington’s. It was like going home again. I thought how wonderful it would be if Mark had returned. The place did not look the same—the fields, the paddocks, the stock. Mrs. Herrington met me at the door of the big house. Something was wrong. She said, ‘Oh Jim, I am so glad to see you. Is Mark with you?’ I told her all I knew—how we were separated in battle, and that I still hoped he was alive. She started to cry, then she said, ‘Frank died the summer you and Mark went to war.’ Then we both wept in each others arms. It was a sad meeting. In a little while I asked her

about the family. Young Frank came to the door. He had developed into a fine looking young man. The girls were pretty and at an age when they would soon be beautiful young ladies.”

“It seemed so good to set up to a good home-cooked meal again. Mrs. Herrington was a fine cook, and there was always an abundance of everything. I told them I would be on my way again and where I intended to go. They insisted that I stay a few days. The next day young Frank and I went to the barn to see the stock and horses. He suggested we saddle up and take a ride. There was the big bay gelding I had ridden before I went away; the same saddle and gear. It was a real pleasure to ride around the farm down to the lake where we used to go fishing and through the forest. A thought struck me. I would like to buy this horse and saddle. It surely would help me crossing the plains to Zion. I had the money. There was a surplus of saddle horses on the farm. The next morning as I was about to leave I proposed buying the horse. Mrs. Herrington said to young Frank, ‘Run down to the barn and bring the horse up here.’ In a few minutes he came back leading the horse saddled, bridled, lariat—everything. Before I could say anything Mrs. Herrington took the reins and handed them to me. She said, ‘This is our going away present to you.’ I couldn’t speak for a few minutes. I kissed Mrs. Herrington and the girls and embraced young Frank, mounted up and rode down the lane out on to the road. I turned, they were all standing there. I waved my hand to them. They all waved back, and that was the last I ever saw of any of them.”

Crossing the plains and the mountains to Utah wasn't easy. When Jim arrived at Independence, Missouri it was too late in the year to start. An early winter could spell disaster. Jim got a job in a livery stable. Being able to handle horses and mules helped him. In this way he lived through the winter. His horse was well fed, and he saved a few extra dollars.

Jim teamed up with a company going to California. They started out in April after the water had begun to subside. Jim rode ahead at times to locate good camp sites. He also hunted game. The progress was slow at times due to rains and swollen streams. When they got to Laramie they stopped for about a week to rest, and then went on through the mountains to Salt Lake City. Here they stopped for a few days. It had taken them three months.

Jim found out that his folks were in Northern Utah in a place called Cache Valley. Logan City was only seven years old, but even then it had the largest population of any place in the valley. It didn't take Jim very long to find P. N. Peterson's (his brother-in-law) home. It was a large log room with a frame lean-to on one side. Jim knocked on the door. Mary, his sister opened it. He said, "Hello Mary." She said, "And who are you?" He said, "I'm your brother Jim." She couldn't believe him. When Mary had last seen Jim he was only twelve years old. There stood before her a man twenty years old who looked nearer thirty. His clothes were rough. He wore leather boots and an army cap. He wore a goatee and a small mustache, but he was straight and fine looking. Mary called Nels. Nels came to the door. Jim held out his

hand. Nels grasped it. "Mary, it is Jim!" They all embraced and then there were tears of joy and happiness.

Years later I heard Uncle Jim say this was the most glorious moment of his life. They had been so close and happy as children in Denmark. Jim said, "Everyone treated me like I was raised from the dead." He was welcomed by all of his relatives. He had cousins in Logan, Providence and Brigham City. They were all immigrants. In fact, every adult living here at that time had crossed the plains. They had known hunger, want and being deprived of all of the comforts of life. Some had experienced great sorrow. My Dad had an aunt in Providence, Utah. She and her husband started out from Denmark with four young children. Before they arrived in Utah all of the children had died on the way. Nevertheless, before the parents died—and they lived to be very old—they raised five more children; Peter, George, Hyrum, Jim, and one girl, Emma. They all grew up to be fine citizens. All raised large families, and they all owned their own homes. This was the Mads Hansen family.

Jim met his mother once. When she recognized him she turned and walked out of the room. She was a zealot. Now she was becoming senile. When she first arrived in Zion she would walk from Logan to Salt Lake City to the General Conference of the Church. This was before the railroad came to Utah. Jim never attempted to speak to his mother again. He said that no boy ever loved a mother more than he did when he was little in Denmark. When he finally realized that she had deserted him—and on purpose—he said that his

love turned to hate, and he cursed her and the religion that caused her to do it.

There is no doubt that all of the traumatic experiences of Uncle Jim's young life had its effect on the kind of a man he was. As I knew of him from personal contact, and from people who dealt with him, he was honest and upright in his dealings. The fact that he chewed tobacco and drank whiskey when he wanted to—well, he lived his own life the way he wanted to, one might say. He was his own man. He was the kind of man that made friends and enemies. Although he couldn't speak a word of English when he landed in America, when I first knew him in the 1890 years he spoke good English without a brogue, and could read and write real well.

In the early 1870 years he was living in St. John, Idaho on his farm. He was married and had a family. St. John was a small farming place west of Malad City, Idaho. I visited his farm once when I was about twelve years old with my father and mother and grandmother, Mary Peterson. This was in about 1898.

The trip from Dad's dry farm which was in what is now Amalga, Utah, was with a team of horses hitched to a canvas top buggy. The first stop was at Uncle Nels' farm in Cornish, Utah, then on through Weston Canyon. The canyon road at times was nothing more than a trail. We camped one night on a small creek about where Deep Creek Reservoir now is located. What a thrill this was. Preparations had been made for just such an event. Dad tethered the horses to a couple of small trees. They took the seats out of the buggy, pulled the canvas sides down, and made a nice

private bedroom for Grandma and Mother. Dad and I slept on the ground by the buggy. What an experience! We had a nice camp fire. In the night the coyotes howled. It sounded like there were hundreds of them. In the morning Mother fried ham and eggs, and made coffee on the camp fire. I'll never forget it.

It was only about twelve miles from where we camped to Uncle Jim's farm in St. John. We arrived there shortly after noon. Uncle Jim's farm was a unique place. The house was two large log rooms with a small storage room on one side. Here Uncle Jim and his wife raised five children. They were all grown now. Millie and Tina were married. Rhoda, a beautiful blonde, was still at home. She was the youngest. William, "Will," and Lafayette, "Laf", a big, broad shouldered six foot tall or more young man, were still at the farm. The first night I slept with Will and Laf on the kitchen floor. They stretched the covers over me like a tent. I was in the middle. When I awoke they were gone, and Mrs. Larsen was preparing breakfast. Rhoda took me around to see the place. There was a large garden. I especially remember the melon and raspberries. At one side there were a dozen or so hives of bees. She warned me, "Don't go too close to them." I had never seen bees. I got a little too near and one hit me just above the eyes. I'll always remember this experience. There were large poplar trees on each side of the main yard. The farm was well stocked with beef cattle, a few milk cows, horses, a few sheep, a pen of pigs, and chickens, a couple of dogs and numerous cats. It was very interesting to me. They raised

hay and grain. All of the stock looked fat and well cared for.

We took a trip one day in to Malad City. Uncle Jim bought some supplies for the home. Jim and Dad left me to watch the team. They went into a place with a large sign, Saloon, above the door (I wasn't so dumb). They gave me some candy and nuts.

I followed Jim and Dad everywhere. It seemed they never ran out of something to talk about. One day Jim said to Dad, "You know, Pete, I now get a pension from Uncle Sam. Twenty five dollars a quarter. Every penny of it goes for whiskey. It's the only money I have ever blowed like this. All the old cronies I know in Malad seem to know when the check arrives. I meet them in the saloon and buy them a couple of drinks. I never allow any drinking on the farm, especially when we are planting or haying—whiskey and work don't mix!" I gathered from the way he talked to Dad that it was like the old saying: "He had stock on the range and money in the bank." In other words, he was quite wealthy. But he still lived in the old log house all the rest of his life.

When Uncle Jim died, Mother and Dad went over to the funeral, and later told me about it. It was held in a new Mormon meeting house. Jim's wife and children bought the most expensive casket they could find. There were some flowers. Quite a large crowd attended. Some thought it was almost sacrilegious to take Jim into a Mormon Church. However, one of the speakers made this remark, "Jim Larsen has a right to be here today. When we were constructing this building we went to Jim and asked him for a donation. At first he

said, "I have never given the Church a red cent, and I don't know why I should start now." We told him, "What about your children or grandchildren? We have observed some of them at Ward parties, also to some church services." Jim sat in deep thought for a few minutes, then he spoke, "Under one condition, that you keep it under your hat. Don't tell anyone." We promised, but today we thought everyone had a right to know. Jim took out his check book and wrote a check, folded it and handed it to us. We thanked him. Jim Larsen made the largest single donation of anyone on this building.

